

**MINNEAPOLIS CHARTER COMMISSION
PROCESS COMMITTEE**

**REPORT
CHARTER-REVISION PROCESS**

July 2002

To the Charter Commission:

The Process Committee recommends that the Commission consider the proposed charter revision under the following process:

Estimated
Timetable

Phase I
Preliminary Organization and Communication

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| <p>1.</p> | <p>Organization. Upon adoption of this report, the Commission will appoint the following committees:</p> <p>(a) Article committees. One committee for each article in the proposed revision. Each article committee consists of two or three commissioners, with the senior commissioner as convener.</p> <p>(b) Editing committee. The Editing Committee consists of three to five commissioners, with the senior commissioner as convener.</p> | <p>6 Aug. 2003</p> |
| <p>2.</p> | <p>Outside readers. Upon adoption of this report, the Commission will identify outside readers experienced in City government and with the Charter. The Commission Chair will write a letter, in substantially the form that accompanies this report, to each such reader inviting his or her participation in the revision process.</p> | <p>6 Aug. 2003</p> |

3. **City Council.** The Commission Chair will write a letter, in substantially the form that accompanies this report, to the City Council president, notifying the Council about the revision process and inviting the Council's and each Council member's input into that process. 13 Aug. 2003
4. **Officers and boards.** The Commission Chair will write a letter, in substantially the form that accompanies this report, to— 13 Aug. 2003
 - (a) the Mayor,
 - (b) the City Coordinator,
 - (c) the Board of Estimate & Taxation,
 - (d) the Library Board,
 - (e) the Park & Recreation Board, and
 - (f) the Civil Service Commission,notifying each officer, board, and commission about the revision process and asking that he, she, or it assign one member or employee who is knowledgeable about City government and about the Charter as a liaison to the Charter Revision Commission.

Phase II
Preliminary Feedback

5. **Preliminary feedback.** Each article committee, the Editing Committee, each outside reader, and each liaison may give preliminary comments and suggestions to the Reporter. The Reporter will forward each such comment or suggestion to the appropriate article committee. Aug.–Sept. 2003
6. **Third draft.** The Reporter will produce a third draft taking into account the preliminary feedback. 22 Sept. 2003

7.	Formal consideration. The Commission will consider and may amend the third draft, article by article, over one or more meetings.	1 Oct. 2003
8.	Editorial review. As the Commission works through the third draft, the Editing Committee will review the draft and the Commission's amendments for style and consistency.	Oct.–Dec. 2003
9.	Fourth draft. At the Commission's first meeting after completing the third draft, the Editing Committee will report any appropriate correction or editorial amendment. The Commission will then adopt the amended third draft as the fourth draft.	7 Jan. 2004

10.	Request for comments from Council members. The Commission will transmit the fourth draft to each Council member with a request for comments and suggestions within 45 days.	14 Jan. 2004
11.	Request for comments from officers and boards. The Commission will transmit the fourth draft to— (a) the Mayor, (b) the City Coordinator, (c) the Board of Estimate & Taxation, (d) the Library Board president, (e) the Park & Recreation Board president, and (f) the Civil Service Commission, with a request for comments and suggestions within 45 days.	14 Jan. 2004

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| 12. | Legal review. The Commission will transmit the fourth draft to the City Attorney with a request for comments and suggestions within 45 days. | 14 Jan. 2004 |
| 13. | Feedback due. The Reporter will collate the feedback, organize it in order according to each provision in the revision to which it relates, and report it to the Commission. The Commission will then schedule a public hearing. | 2 Mar. 2004 |
| 14. | Report and commentary. The Reporter will submit a draft report and commentary. | 16 Mar. 2004 |

Phase V
Public Hearings

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| 15. | Public hearings. The Commission will hold one or more public hearings where it will consider the formal feedback and other public input, and may amend the fourth draft. | Apr.–June 2004 |
| 16. | Fifth draft. At a public hearing, the Commission will adopt the amended fourth draft as the fifth draft. | 2 June 2004 |
| 17. | Final editing. The Editing Committee will edit and finalize the fifth draft and the accompanying report and commentary. | 16 June 2004 |
| 18. | Final hearing. The Commission will hold a final public hearing at which it considers the Editing Committee's report and adopts the proposed revision in final form. | 7 July 2004 |

Phase VI
Transmittal

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| 19. | Transmittal. The Commission will transmit the proposed revision to the City Council for its consideration. | 14 July 2004 |
| 20. | Council process. The Commission will support the City Council as requested as the Council considers the proposed revision. | |

Respectfully submitted,

KAREN COLLIER,
DONALD FRASER, and
JAMES THEUER, *chair*,

Process Committee.

July 2003.

LETTER TO OUTSIDE READERS

DRAFT

Dear _____:

The Minneapolis Charter Commission has begun an extensive revision of the City Charter. I am writing in order to invite your input as an outside reader advising the Commission as it undertakes this task.

This revision's purpose is *not* restructuring the City government or otherwise effecting any substantive change. Its purpose is only modernizing, simplifying, and uncluttering the Charter, and redrafting its provisions for clarity, brevity, and consistency. As you may know, when Minneapolis first adopted a city charter in 1920, the first charter commission did not draft a charter from scratch: instead, it simply compiled the special laws then in force affecting the City, and collated them into a loosely organized document that became the first charter. That charter has since undergone about a hundred amendments, often by the City Council, sometimes by referendum, and has now become a highly impractical document—more than 70,000 words long; confusingly organized; full of redundant or conflicting provisions, or provisions long since overridden by statute; cluttered with detail better suited to ordinances; and written in a legalistic style that is more than a century out of date, and practically unintelligible to a nonlawyer (and exceptionally difficult even for lawyers).

The Commission received a draft revision at its meeting last month, and will be considering and refining that revision over the next year or so. I am enclosing for your information the charter-revision process that the Commission adopted at its last meeting.

We hope that you will act as an outside reader who can offer preliminary feedback over the next couple months, while the drafting is at an early stage. The Reporter for the charter-revision-process is Brian Melendez, Faegre & Benson LLP, 2200 Wells Fargo Center, 90 South Seventh Street, Minneapolis, MN 55402-3901 (ph. 612.766.7309, e/m brian.melendez@usa.net). Will you please let Commissioner Melendez or me know whether you are willing to read and comment on the current draft revision? If so, then we will furnish you with the necessary materials for your review.

Thank you very much. We look forward to hearing from you.

Very sincerely yours,

Joseph M. Bester
Chair
Charter Commission

LETTER TO CITY COUNCIL

DRAFT

City Council
c/o Paul Ostrow, President
307 City Hall
350 South Fifth Street
Minneapolis, MN 55415

Dear President Ostrow and Council Members:

The Minneapolis Charter Commission has begun an extensive revision of the City Charter, which we contemplate transmitting to the City Council in Summer 2004, about a year from now. I am writing in order to let you know about the Commission's work on the revision; and to ask for your input about what process, and what kinds of information and communication, will be most useful to you as the Commission moves toward a proposed revision for your consideration next year.

This revision's purpose is *not* restructuring the City government or otherwise effecting any substantive change. Its purpose is only modernizing, simplifying, and uncluttering the Charter, and redrafting its provisions for clarity, brevity, and consistency. As you may know, when Minneapolis first adopted a city charter in 1920, the first charter commission did not draft a charter from scratch: instead, it simply compiled the special laws then in force affecting the City, and collated them into a loosely organized document that became the first charter. That charter has since undergone about a hundred amendments, often by the City Council, sometimes by referendum, and has now become a highly impractical document—more than 70,000 words long; confusingly organized; full of redundant or conflicting provisions, or provisions long since overridden by statute; cluttered with detail better suited to ordinances; and written in a legalistic style that is more than a century out of date, and practically unintelligible to a nonlawyer (and exceptionally difficult even for lawyers).

The Commission received a draft revision at its meeting last month, and will be considering and refining that revision over the next year or so. I am enclosing for your information the charter-revision process that the Commission adopted at its last meeting. We welcome your input about how this process, or a different process, will be most conducive to your consideration when the Commission reports the proposed revision to you.

Please let me know if you have any comments at this early stage. If any Council Member is interested in receiving particular information or more frequent communication about the Commission's work on revising the Charter, the Reporter for the charter-revision-process is Brian Melendez, Faegre & Benson LLP, 2200 Wells Fargo Center, 90 South Seventh Street, Minneapolis, MN 55402-3901 (ph. 612.766.7309, e/m brian.melendez@usa.net); please let Commissioner Melendez or me know what information you would like, or how you prefer that we communicate with you, and we will gladly accommodate you.

Thank you very much. Please contact Commissioner Melendez or me if you have any questions.

Very sincerely yours,

Joseph M. Bester
Chair
Charter Commission

LETTER TO OFFICERS AND BOARDS

DRAFT

Library Board of Trustees
c/o Laura Waterman Wittstock, President
250 Marquette Avenue
Minneapolis, MN 55401

Dear President Wittstock and Trustees:

The Minneapolis Charter Commission has begun an extensive revision of the City Charter. Since the Charter provides for the Library Board, I am writing in order to ask that you assign one member or employee who is knowledgeable about the Board as a liaison to the Charter Revision Commission.

This revision's purpose is *not* restructuring the City government or otherwise effecting any substantive change. Its purpose is only modernizing, simplifying, and uncluttering the Charter, and redrafting its provisions for clarity, brevity, and consistency. As you may know, when Minneapolis first adopted a city charter in 1920, the first charter commission did not draft a charter from scratch: instead, it simply compiled the special laws then in force affecting the City, and collated them into a loosely organized document that became the first charter. That charter has since undergone about a hundred amendments, often by the City Council, sometimes by referendum, and has now become a highly impractical document—more than 70,000 words long; confusingly organized; full of redundant or conflicting provisions, or provisions long since overridden by statute; cluttered with detail better suited to ordinances; and written in a legalistic style that is more than a century out of date, and practically unintelligible to a nonlawyer (and exceptionally difficult even for lawyers).

The Commission received a draft revision at its meeting last month, and will be considering and refining that revision over the next year or so. I am enclosing for your information the charter-revision process that the Commission adopted at its last meeting.

We hope that you will assign a liaison who can educate the Commission about the Library Board's work and offer preliminary feedback over the next couple months, while the drafting is at an early stage. The Reporter for the charter-revision-process is Brian Melendez, Faegre & Benson LLP, 2200 Wells Fargo Center, 90 South Seventh Street, Minneapolis, MN 55402-3901 (ph. 612.766.7309, e/m brian.melendez@usa.net). If you are willing to appoint a

liaison, will you please ask that he or she contact Commissioner Melendez? We will then furnish the liaison with the necessary materials for his or her review.

Thank you very much. We look forward to hearing from you.

Very sincerely yours,

Joseph M. Bester
Chair
Charter Commission